

ing. The Panama story was used in the campaign for political reasons solely. The only thing that gave it political value in the eyes of those who used it was the fact that the story, as printed, carried the names of a brother of the republican candidate for the presidency and of a brother-in-law of the president. The inference was plain enough. It was that Theodore Roosevelt and William H. Taft had used their influence as high officials of the United States government to help near relatives in looting the treasury at Washington. That was the meat of the story. If the names of Douglas Robinson and Charles P. Taft had not been included in it, flimsy as it was, the lying yarn would never have been used by the World, the Indianapolis News and other papers, which for one reason or another, wanted to defeat Mr. Taft and discredit Mr. Roosevelt.

"The World is trying to dodge the issue. It wants to be relieved of the responsibility of trying to drag the names of Mr. Robinson and Mr. Taft into its made to order mess of scandal and slime. Both the World and the Indianapolis News are crying 'let in the light.' We thoroughly agree with them. But after a little time has passed, after the most desperate effort of the cornered World and News have produced all the evidence they can, an apology will be in order from those newspapers."

WHO GOT THE MONEY?

(From an editorial in New York World.)

Charles P. Taft seems to regard the World's challenge of Mr. Roosevelt's misstatements of fact as a personal attack upon him. If full publicity of the facts about the Panama transactions implicates any of the Tafts, he has only himself to blame.

William Nelson Cromwell is primarily responsible for the bringing of William H. Taft into this matter. It was Mr. Cromwell who conferred with Mr. Taft at the Hotel Manhattan the day before Mr. Taft went to Oyster Bay, and who met him again on his return. It was Mr. Cromwell who visited Mr. Taft at Hot Springs and secured the appointment of George R. Sheldon as treasurer of the republican national committee. It was Mr. Cromwell who undertook to manage the republican campaign.

But it was not Mr. Cromwell who replied to the question "Who got the money?" with "liar," "abominable falsehood," "not merely scandalous but infamous." Not Mr. Cromwell but Mr. Roosevelt said:

"The United States did not pay a cent of the \$40,000,000 to any American citizen. The government paid this \$40,000,000 direct to the French government. The United States government has not the slightest knowledge as to the particular individuals among whom the French government distributed the same. So far as I know there was no syndicate."

Mr. Cromwell's testimony before the senate committee in 1906 contradicts each of these statements of Mr. Roosevelt.

To these contradictions in the senate record is now added the emphatic contradiction of Senator Millard, of Nebraska, the republican chairman of the committee on inter-oceanic canals, who says:

"The French government had nothing to do with the sale of the canal property. About the only man who had anything to do with that was William Nelson Cromwell. The money was paid to J. P. Morgan & Co., instead of to the French government, as stated by Mr. Roosevelt. None of it was paid to the French government, so far as I know, and the French government did not have the distribution of it."

Another contradiction of Mr. Roosevelt's statement that "the government paid this \$40,000,000 direct to the French government" is found in the checks to J. P. Morgan & Co., and by them indorsed, which are on file in the treasury department.

Solicitor-General Hoyt in an inspired defense says that the money was paid to the liquidator, M. Gautron, and that this was payment to the French government. According to Cromwell's testimony only \$25,000,000 of the \$40,000,000 was paid to the liquidator of the de Lesseps company. Even had it all been paid to M. Gautron, that would be no more payment to the French government than a payment to the receivers of the Metropolitan Traction is payment to the government of the United States.

The old de Lesseps company had failed and a receiver had been appointed. There was no market for the property and the claims were selling at a few cents on the dollar. Somebody bought up many of them. Then Mr. Cromwell,

acting for the new Panama Canal company, sold the property of the old Panama Canal company to the United States for \$40,000,000 and paid the de Lesseps receiver \$25,000,000 for what cost the United States \$40,000,000.

So far as the World's information goes, none of the brothers of Mr. William H. Taft was in the original syndicate. The executors of Senator Gorman and of Senator Hanna might furnish information about the original syndicators. So might J. P. Morgan & Co., Douglas Robinson and William Nelson Cromwell. If any of Mr. Taft's brothers were syndicators they came in later.

A public investigation by congress to find out who got the money is an imperative necessity.

THE INDIANAPOLIS NEWS' REPLY

The Indianapolis News, whose editor, Delavan Smith, was attacked by Mr. Roosevelt, prints the following editorial:

"Disregarding the president's abuse and disclaiming any desire or ambition to compete with him in the language of invective, we nevertheless feel that it is both our right and our duty to give the facts of our course in relation to the Panama canal charges.

"In the first place, it is remarkable that the criticisms of the News, which were based largely on the statements of the New York World, criticisms which were made over and over again during the campaign, were utterly ignored till today. The only man who paid any attention to them was Mr. Charles P. Taft, who did deny that he was in any way related to the affair. We had no word from the president or Mr. Taft. The other men, such as Cromwell and Morgan, who were believed to have full information in regard to the business, said nothing.

"But now, after the campaign is over, the president rushes into print through his familiar way, and says, with his usual violence and virulence, that the News is a liar. Now what are the facts?

"The first is that the News is far from being the only paper that ventured to suggest that the silence of all concerned only served to strengthen the suspicion, which was generally held, that all was not right. The New York World was the original authority. The Chicago Journal was quite as vigorous as was this paper in comments. Unless our memory is at fault, the Louisville Courier-Journal was not wholly unimpressed by the charges.

"The charges were indeed repeated over and over again, and toward the close of the campaign we, as did others, drew what seemed to be the necessary and inevitable conclusion that silence was practically tantamount to confession. But now we have the president's denial, which is not made till it is too late for any votes to be affected or influenced by a discussion of the subject.

"And what does his denial amount to? He only says that the money was not paid to any syndicate or any American citizens, but to the French government. He does not know to whom that government paid the money. The president says:

"The fact has been officially published again and again that the government paid \$40,000,000 and that it paid this \$40,000,000 direct to the French government, getting the receipt of the liquidator appointed by the French government to receive the same. The United States has not the slightest knowledge as to the particular individuals among whom the French government distributed the sum. This was the business of the French government. The mere supposition that any American received from the French government a 'rake-off' is too absurd to be discussed. It is an abominable falsehood, and it is a slander, not against the American government, but against the French government."

"The president, in one breath, says that it is absurd to suppose that any American got a rake-off, and in another, that neither he nor the government knows to whom the French government paid the money. If neither the president nor our government knows who got the money, the president can not know but that some American citizen got some of it. This is the sort of denial that the country is asked to accept. The French government could pay the money only to the men holding the securities of the old Panama company. That is what it did.

"The president says that he does not know who those men were. And yet, possessing no knowledge on the subject, he denies absolutely, as he confesses without knowledge, that any of

this money found its way into American pockets. "Again it is remembered that a prominent Frenchman, closely connected with the business, practically admitted that some Americans got the money, and said that he could see nothing wrong in it. From all of which we conclude that the subject is more than ever one into which congress should inquire.

"But the president says that no records were turned over to this government early in June last, and that the last records that came into possession of this government were received in May, 1904. But this charge was made by those who investigated the affair, and they said that they were unable to get access to the final records, which were turned over to our government when the transaction was finally closed in June of the present year.

"Our offense consisted solely in accepting this statement as true. It was made on responsible authority and has never been denied till today. If there is anything 'scandalous' or 'infamous' in this the scandal and infamy do not attach to the News. Even the denial made by the president in behalf of his brother-in-law would have been more impressive had it come from that gentleman himself.

"As illustrating the president's peculiar method of dealing with matters of this kind, we may refer to his reiteration in this remarkable letter of his denial of the charge of the New York Sun in regard to his granting a franchise to a Standard Oil company in Oklahoma. He prints his denial, but has not one word to any of the Sun's reiteration of the charge. Yet this reiteration was made by the Sun in its issue of November 26, or five days before the president dated his letter.

"The News took the only course that could have been taken by a paper whose policy it is to print the news and to tell the truth about it. The charges were publicly made by a responsible paper—made many times during the campaign and no attention whatever was paid to them by the president or the men (except Charles P. Taft) said to be involved. And even now the president openly admits that he has not evidence in his possession, has no knowledge on which it is possible to base a denial. He does not know who got the money, and yet he says positively that no American got any of it.

"The News has not the slightest desire to misrepresent the facts nor to make unwarranted inferences. It had no purpose or motive but to serve the best interests of the people by publishing what it believed to be pertinent and timely information relating to a matter of public importance. It repeatedly expressed surprise that all the men (except Charles P. Taft), whose names were mentioned in connection with the charges continued to ignore them.

"On a review of all the circumstances as they presented themselves at the time, we confess that we are unable to see what other course the News could consistently have pursued. As for the president's characteristic personal attack on Mr. Delavan Smith, one of the owners of the News, that is a question in which the public can have no legitimate interest. But the canal question is a public question. It is one into which congress should inquire."

AN INTERNATIONAL INQUIRY

A Washington dispatch to the Omaha World-Herald says:

"Democratic senators and house leaders have about decided upon their policy concerning the demand for investigation on the Panama canal fiscal charges. It is believed that no investigation would be worth while which should not be international in scope. To have access to the records of the war department is thought useless unless it can be supplemented by an inquiry in Paris. To this end it is thought that this government would have to ask the co-operation of the French government and secure the privilege of employing the process of the French courts in order to compel people of France to testify. Whether this can be done is not yet known. The situation is believed to be unprecedented—at least no precedent has been found for it. The co-operation of the French government is considered doubtful, in view of the fact that France has once been torn by a great canal scandal. However, it is expected by Senator Culberson and other democrats that as soon as these aspects can be investigated a resolution properly framed will be introduced, probably calling on the war department for papers and on the state department for co-operation. Meanwhile the Rainey resolution on the same subject introduced in the house yesterday will be allowed to take its course."